



Newt Conservation Partnership

Heritage Statement

for Planning Application reference: PP-12767845

Land at Rowley Green Meadow, Stoke Park Farm

Proposed new pond complex of up to seven new clean water wildlife ponds at Stoke Park Farm, Eastleigh

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1. Introduction

1.1 Newt Conservation Partnership (NCP) have prepared this report in relation to the proposed creation of a mosaic of seven clean water wildlife ponds with associated hedge and tree planting at Rowley Green Meadow, Stoke Park Farm. The aim of the project is to increase the biodiversity value of the site and provide suitable breeding habitat for great crested newts (GCN).

2.5 If approved, the work will be carried out by NCP under GCN Organisational Licence (WML-OR112) which has been granted by Natural England as part of the great crested newt District Licensing scheme for GCN developed by NatureSpace Partnership (NSP), the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARC) and the Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT). Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) joined the Licence as part of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight region on 1st August 2023.

2.6 The Newt Conservation Partnership is working with landowners in over 60 Local Planning Authorities in England to deliver the creation and long-term management of wildlife-friendly ponds and surrounding habitat for GCN. The scheme aims to increase the number of high-quality clean water ponds connected by suitable terrestrial habitat, creating a strategic network of favourable habitats where newt populations can thrive.

2.7 Rowley Green Meadow at Stoke Park Farm has been identified as a potential Compensation site. Compensation sites are secured for at least 25 years under legal agreement with the landowner. If the scheme is approved, NCP and EBC will enter into a legal agreement to carry out the agreed work and then manage and monitor the site over 25 years.

2. Site details

3.1 Stoke Park Farm is owned and managed by EBC. The site was operated as a dairy farm prior to 2021 and acquired by EBC in 2022.

3.2 Stoke Park Farm is approximately 1km east of Eastleigh, on the northeastern border of Bishopstoke. It lies within EBC and Bishopstoke Parish Council's administrative areas. The grid reference for the buildings and hardstanding at Stoke Park Farm is SU 47933 20268.

3.3 Stoke Park Farm totals approximately 103.12 hectares in surface area. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal carried out for EBC by Ecus Ltd in January 2023 (PEA Ecus 2023) identified that it "primarily comprised arable land (pasture) with pockets of woodland, hedgerows, lines of trees and farm buildings including a residential property", and that it "is surrounded by woodland to the south, arable fields to the north and suburban areas to the east and west".

3.4 Rowley Green Meadow is at the northeastern corner of Stoke Park Farm. It measures approximately 8 hectares and comprises former arable and intensive pasture. It is bordered by hedgerows to the north and east, the Bow Lake (stream) to the south, and a bridleway to the west. The central grid reference for Rowley Green Meadow is SU 47839 20946.

3.5 The application site is within Rowley Green Meadow and measures 1.6 hectares in surface area. The central grid reference for the application site is SU 47776 20921.

3.6 Figure 1 shows the locations of Stoke Park Farm, Rowley Green Meadow, and the application site within Rowley Green Meadow, along with the access to the site, and figure 2 shows the proposal for Rowley Green Meadow.

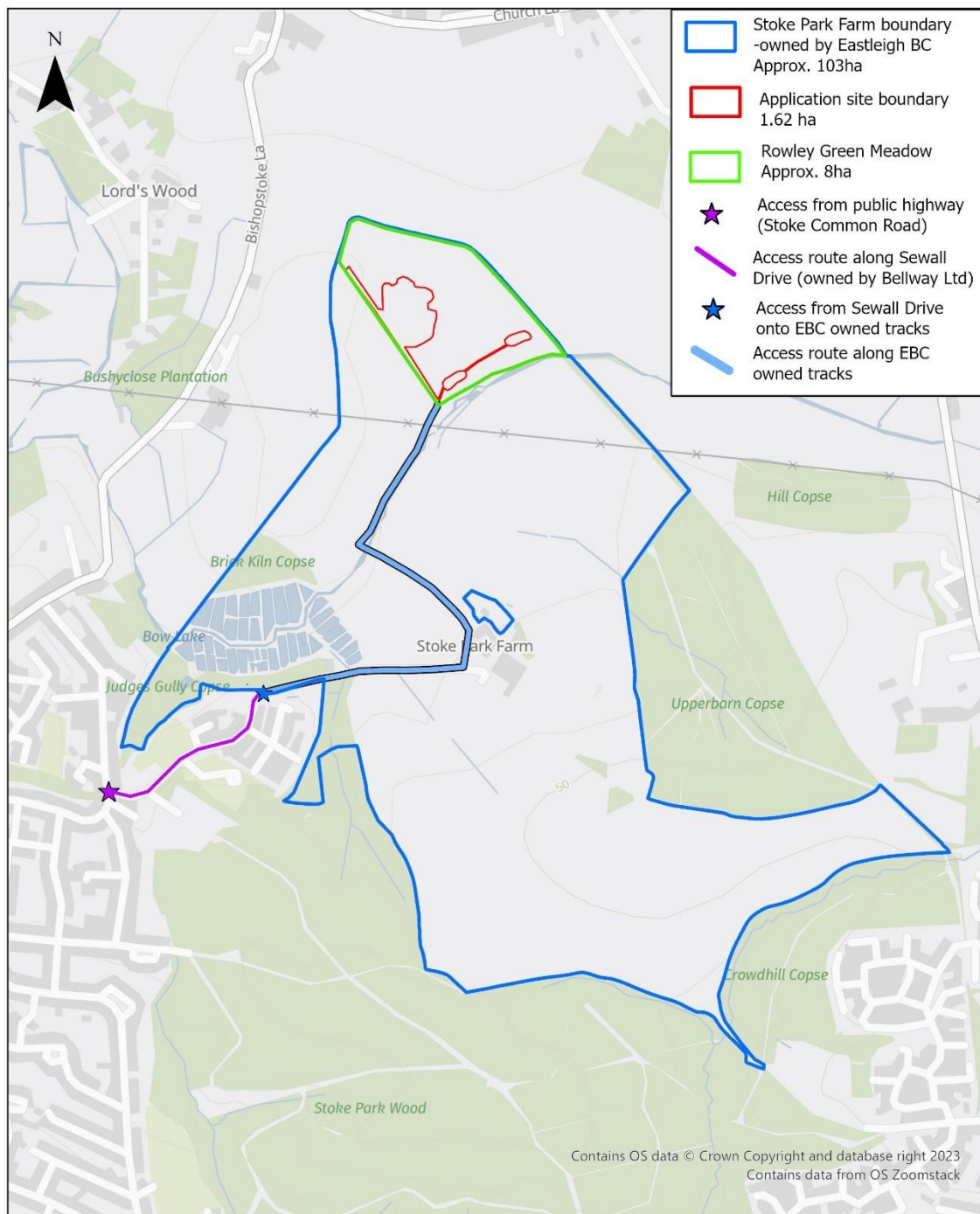


Figure 2 - location and access points

Date created: November 2023

Scale: 1:10,000

Scaled to A4

0 50 100 200 300 400 500 Meters

Created by: Anna-Marie Dennis



Figure 1: Location and access points

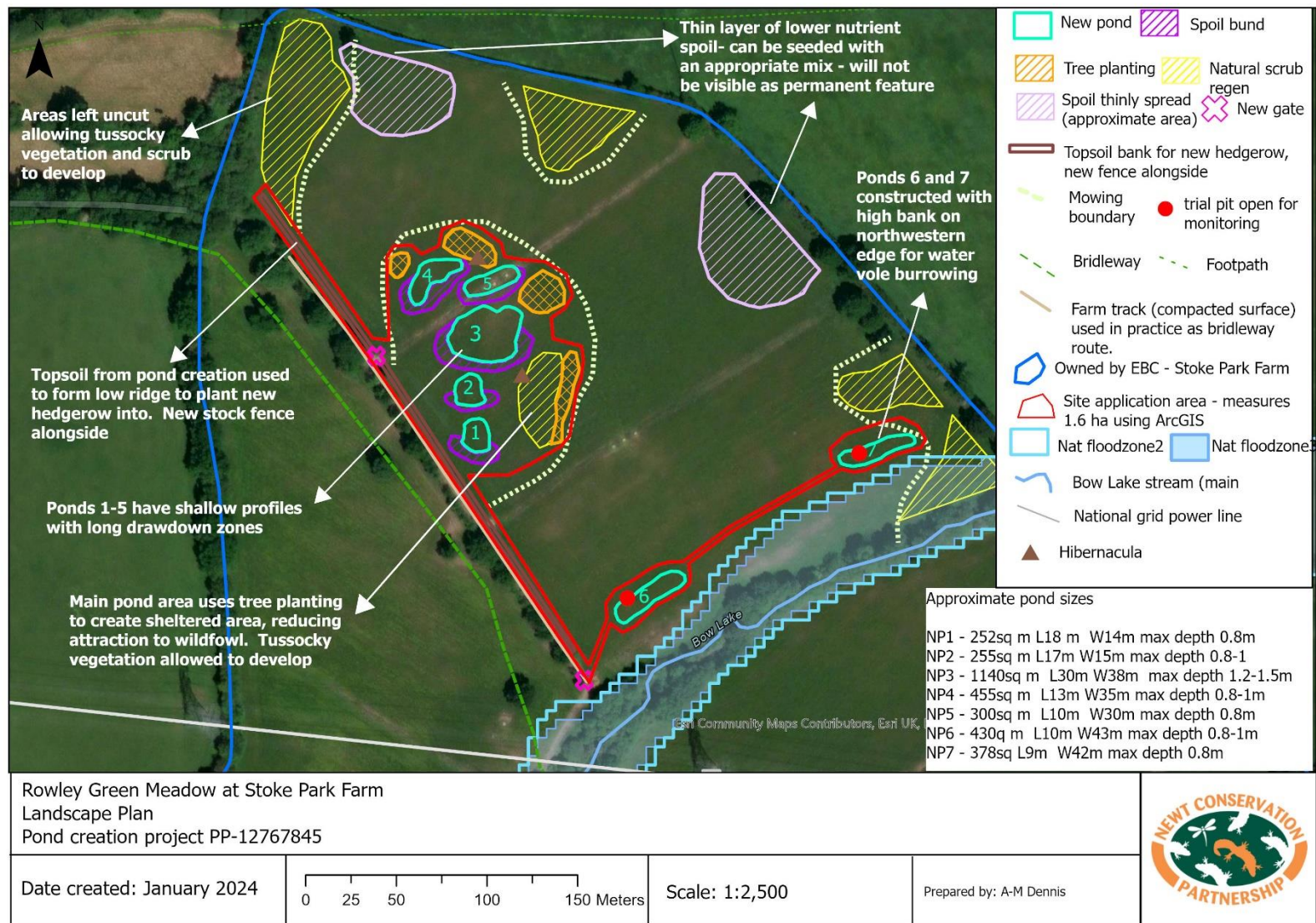


Figure 2: Landscape plan of proposed nature conservation project in Rowley Green Meadow

3. Archaeology and historic environment

3.1 Searches

3.1.1 The following searches have been carried out:

- Hampshire County Council online Historic Environment Record (HER) (looking for known archaeological sites, find, historic buildings, parks and gardens and industrial monuments in the application site and the surrounding area)
- DEFRA's MAGIC mapping tool (looking for Parks and Gardens and battlefield sites in the application site and the surrounding area)

3.2 Search results

3.2.1 No heritage information was recorded within Rowley Green Meadow. The nearest heritage data, found on the HER database, was a 'findspot' in a field to the east of Stoke Park Farm (approx. 100m to the east of the application site) relating to a 'thames pick' and Mesolithic flint knife.

3.2.2 The farmhouse at Stoke Park Farm (approximately 400m east of the application site) is historic but unlisted.

3.3 Historical context

3.3.1 Rowley Green Meadow formed part of the grazing land of Stoke Park Farm until it was sold to EBC in 2022 and farming operations ceased. At my first visit in March 2023 the site comprised heavily modified grassland, rising from a small floodplain of the Bow Lake stream in the south to higher ground to the north. The meadow was bordered to the north and east by hedges with some scattered semi-mature oak trees, to the south by the Bow Lake stream, and to the west by a bridleway with a compacted surface and a scattered line of semi-mature trees. The western boundary was partially fenced with wire fencing, and the meadow was divided into three roughly equal sections with internal wire fencing. Each section had a group of modern circular cattle drinking troughs.

3.3.2 Initially it seemed that the internal fences might follow an old hedge line which could be restored. However, on consulting the National Library of Scotland historic map collection, I found that on all of the maps the meadow is shown with trees and hedges around the border but not dividing it. Plans were developed to incorporate small copses and scrub, and re-establish a western boundary hedge, but not divide the site using the modern boundaries.

3.3.3 The older maps also named the bridleway to the west of the site as 'Rowley Green Drove'. This led the NCP Project Officer and the EBC Ecology and Trees Manager to start referring to the site as 'Rowley Green Meadow'.

3.3.4 Views from Rowley Green Drive into Rowley Green Meadow will be maintained through the use of viewing points in the hedge and gateways.

3.3.4 The historic maps and query with the former owner of the site helped establish that drainage (plastic French drains in a grid pattern) had been laid throughout Rowley Green Meadow in the early

1970's, following a slightly earlier main drain running diagonally across the meadow from the 1960's or earlier.

3.3.5 No 'ghost ponds' (ponds filled in within the last 100 years) were found on the historic maps.

3.4 County Archaeologist informal advice

3.4.1 The NCP Project Officer informally discussed the proposed plans with the County Archaeologist as they were developed. Helpful advice was offered and is summarised below. The email chain is available on request.

- The site may have archaeological potential, primarily evidence of early prehistoric activity (due to local finds and the tributary river valley landscape).
- This is more likely to be finds such as tools than remains of a built site.
- Watching brief recommended (inspection of the excavation process to recognise any archaeology found).

4. Conclusion

4.1 The project will not impact on any known historic buildings or landscapes.

4.2 It is possible that archaeology will be uncovered during the excavation of the ponds.

4.3 NCP will appoint an archaeologist to carry out a watching brief during the excavations. This will be carried out to the standards set out in Hampshire County Council's Advice on archaeology for developers [Archaeology and Planning: Guidance for Developers \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://hants.gov.uk/archaeology-and-planning-guidance-for-developers).

5. Plan

5.1 NCP will appoint an Archaeologist to carry a watching brief of all excavations in the application site. They will be a Registered Organisation of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

5.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation will be submitted to the planning authority for approval before any works take place.

5.3 Following completion of archaeological fieldwork a report will be produced in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and supplied to the planning authority. EBC and NCP will publicise any archaeological findings as part of their communications for the pond creation scheme, which may include press releases and social media. Any finds would also be interpreted on the information boards to be displayed at viewing points into Rowley Green Meadow.

6. References

Hampshire County Council online Historic Environment Record [Archaeology and historic environment | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://hants.gov.uk/archaeology-and-historic-environment)

DEFRA MAGIC mapping application [Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://defra.gov.uk/magic)

National Library of Scotland historic map collection [Map images - National Library of Scotland \(nls.uk\)](https://nls.uk/map-images)

Hampshire County Council's Advice on archaeology for developers [Archaeology and Planning: Guidance for Developers \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://hants.gov.uk/archaeology-and-planning-guidance-for-developers).

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists [Welcome | Chartered Institute for Archaeologists](https://www.cifa.org.uk/)